



# POLICY BRIEF



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[www.socialprotection.gov.bd](http://www.socialprotection.gov.bd)

## Non-State Actor Report on Social Protection Marginalized Groups, Needs, and Policy Options

### Who this is for

Social protection policy makers in government, development partners, and non-state actors

### Key messages

- 11 major marginalized communities in Bangladesh identified
- Marginalized communities have distinct challenges and needs
- 20,000 Non-State Actor (NSA) organizations operating across major development areas.
- NSAs can support the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in identifying challenges, needs, and policy options for marginalized communities and supporting direct service delivery.

### Policy Options

- Expanding forums for NSAs to participate in social protection policy, through contribution of evidence, on-the-ground experience, and coordination.
- Utilizing NSA expertise through opportunities for decentralized, direct service delivery.

### Major Marginalized Communities in Bangladesh

#### Socio-economic status

Those living near or below the poverty line

- High poverty, malnutrition, limited access to affordable healthcare

#### Religion / caste

Religious minority and ostracized castes groups

- Discrimination and social exclusion

#### Disability and disease

Persons with physical or mental disabilities, and persons with communicable or severe diseases

- Higher unemployment rates compared to national average; limited access to affordable treatments

#### Violence

Trafficked survivors, acid survivors, sexually violated, raped victims

- Limited trauma and mental health support

#### Ethnicity

Ethnic and Indigenous minority groups

- Higher poverty rates compared to national average

#### Age

Young, adolescent, and elderly persons

- Malnutrition; limited training and employment opportunities; high poverty

#### Migrant and mobile

Cross-border migrants, internal migrants, refugees, landless

- Difficulty accessing available social protection programs

#### Occupation

Tea plantation, sweepers, dom, beggar, child labourer, unemployed, and sex workers

- High poverty, discrimination, & social exclusion

#### Geographic

People living in hard-to-rich, coastal, haor areas, char, hill areas

- Difficulty accessing available social protection programs

#### Sexual orientation

Transgender/third gender (Hijra), gay, lesbian

- Discrimination and social exclusion

#### Climate and Disaster

Victims of natural & man-made disaster, & those impacted by climate change

- Limited trauma and mental health support



## Priority Needs of Marginalized Communities

The challenges faced by marginalized communities in Bangladesh range from higher rates of poverty compared to national averages, discrimination and social exclusion, geographic exclusion, and barriers to accessing public and private social protection programming. These communities require support in improving their socio-economic quality of life. Major needs include increased access to available social protection programs through awareness and a reduction in barriers, livelihood opportunities, social awareness, and psychosocial support.



## Development Areas of Non-State Actor

### 17 major development areas of NSA operation

- Credit/ micro finance
- Women development
- Non-formal education
- Occupational skill training
- Relief & Rehabilitation
- Employment generation and income earning
- Environment
- Political participation
- Leadership development
- Urban & Rural Development
- Family planning and development of children
- Humanitarian & Legal Aid
- Development of appropriate irrigation technologies
- Access to government services and activate local administration
- Health and nutritional knowledge
- Mobilization of target group and consciousness-raising
- Capacity building in planning & management

## NSA Strengths

### 1. Capacity to reach the poor and the remote areas:

NGOs focus on the poorest segment of society where government programs are either limited, don't exist, or are ineffective.

### 6. Capacity to innovate and adapt:

Being more flexible than government agencies, NGOs can transfer technologies developed elsewhere and adapt them to conditions as well as work out innovative responses to local needs.

### 7. Advocacy capacity:

The NGOs can press the public sector and their successful initiatives make them able to influence national policies and give them the advocacy power to governmental organizations.

### 2. Capacity to promote local participation:

The prime purpose of the NGOs is to encourage and develop local potential and to enable disadvantaged groups to share the benefits of development.

### 8. Capacity to facilitate local resource mobilization and ensure local development:

The NGOs have demonstrated their ability to facilitate resource mobilization by promoting local participation.

### 3. Capacity to operate on low costs:

To use low-cost technologies and streamlined services enables them to operate efficiently on low budgets.

### 9. Capacity to act quickly:

Speed of action and a minimum of bureaucratic tangle is one of the greatest assets of development NGOs so that they can take decisions rapidly.

### 10. Capacity to take risks and experiments:

NGOs normally undertake pilot projects to experiment or act as a catalyst and to attain their objectives they take risks much more readily than governmental agencies.

### 4. Capacity to work with other agencies

Many NGOs are ready and able to assist governments, local govt departments, and local voluntary agencies.

### 5. Capacity to work with flexibility:

Due to their small size, NGOs tend to be more flexible than government programs or local govt. programs.

### 11. Capacity of a unique understanding of local institutions & socio-cultural environment:

NGOs tend to have accurate knowledge and understanding of local needs and capacities to undertake projects as well as find materials.

